



Roseville Legend

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LOWRY COFFEEPOT DISCOVERED IN ILLINOIS— BUT WHICH LOWRY?

By James L. Murphy

A tan and brown glazed earthenware coffeepot recently found in southern Illinois, was undoubtedly made in Roseville by one of the **Lowry** cookware potteries; but the history of these potteries is complicated, and it remains uncertain just when and where in Roseville it was manufactured.

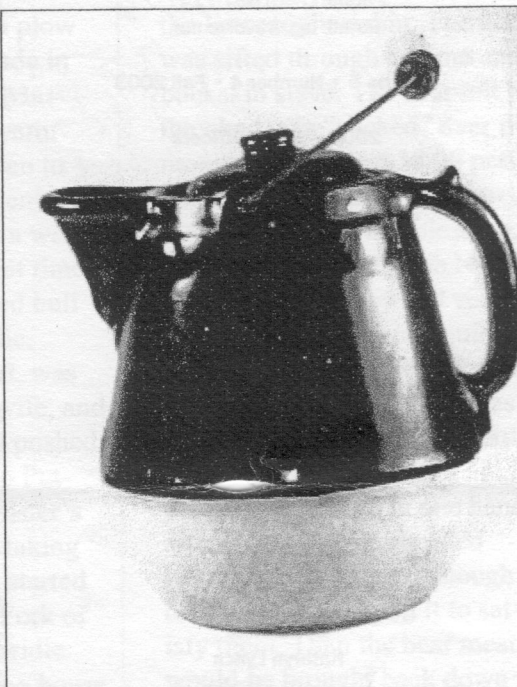
Attribution is made on the basis of the molded design of hearts on a punctate or “cellular” border around the base, as well as a series of raised rings on the base, which are impressed with the words “Trade-mark Registered Deutschland Acid Proof Fire Clay.” **Lois Lehner** (1988) was the first to note **Frederick S. Lowry’s** 1903 patent for this “honey-combed or cellular design,” which **Lowry** claimed was used since 1896, and this is probably the trademark referred to as “Trademark Registered”—at least, no other registration for the “Deutschland” mark has been found in the U.S. Patent Office’s *Official Gazette*.

In 1999 **Helen Kildow** provided information on **Lyman Lowry**, known as the “Father of Cooking Ware.” He began potting in 1881, and manufactured his “Excelsior” cookware

cookware from at least 1894 to 1898. (It is possible that cookware with the “IXL” mark represents **Lyman Lowry’s** Excelsior ware.) **Lyman Lowry’s** pottery stood between South Fork and what became Potter’s Alley, behind the newspaper office of *The Independent* and just north of the **Pace Brothers Pottery**, which stood behind **St Paul’s Lutheran Church**.

This pottery was also known as the **Lowry Brothers Pottery**, operated by **Lyman’s** sons from 1901-1913, but by 1918 it had become the **C. W. Lowry Pottery**, operated by **Lyman’s** son **Curtis** and still later operated by his daughter and son-in-law, **Daisy and Charles W. Culp**, until it burned in the mid 1940s.

But who was **Frederick S. Lowry**? The 1918 *Sanborn Fire Insurance Map* of Roseville shows the **F.S. Lowry Pottery** along the west side of the Pennsylvania Railroad and just north of Third Street, just north of the **Roseville Pottery Company’s** No. 1 plant and across the railroad from the **Brush McCoy Pottery**. By the time the 1930 *Sanborn* map was compiled, this had become part of the **Tycker Pottery Co.** Working backwards, the 1895 *Sanborn* map shows the same one-kiln operation as the **W.B. Lowry Pot-**



Above, a tan and brown glazed earthenware coffeepot attributed to F.S. Lowry and below, the mark on the bottom features a series of raised rings on the base, which are impressed with the words “Trade-mark Registered Deutschland Acid Proof Fire Clay. [Photos courtesy of James L. Murphy].

tery, while the 1889 map shows the **W. B. Lowry Pottery**, but with two kilns.

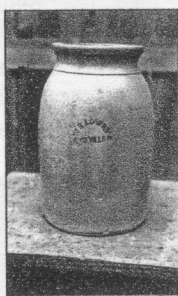
William B. and Frederick S. Lowry were father and son, and William was a brother of the more famous **Lyman Lowry**. Stoneware canning jars marked "W. B. Lowry, Roseville, O." remain fairly common. As early as 1880, **Frederick**, aged 12, was listed as working in a pottery, presumably his father's. Directory listings show **W. B. Lowry** manufacturing pottery from 1885 to 1896. In 1885 he was listed as making drain tile and flower pots but by the following year he was making "stew pots, etc." According to historian **Henry Howe**, he employed six people in 1888; by 1895 (*Factory Inspector's Report*), this number had increased to nine employees making cooking ware." **W.B. Lowry** was still an active potter in 1910, when, aged 71, he and wife **Mildred** were living on Perry Street in Roseville. **Frederick S. Lowry** was a pottery jobber in 1900, suggesting he had not yet taken over his father's pottery, but was well enough off to be able to afford a servant. While it is not known when **Frederick** took over his father's pottery, it is known that he died in 1916 and by 1916 the plant had been taken over by the **Tyler Pottery**.

While it would seem most likely that the cooking ware with the heart design was made by **William B. and Frederick Lowry** at their pottery west of the Pennsylvania Railroad, several sherds with this motif have been found at the site of the **Lyman Lowry Pottery** east of Pot-



Above, is an **F.S. Lowry** honeycombed or cellular designed bowl along with a sherd obtained from the site of the **Lyman Lowry Pottery**. [Photo courtesy of James L. Murphy.]

tery east of Potters Alley. Archaeological excavations at the two sites might determine whether this design was used by both potteries or whether its presence at the **Lyman Lowry** pottery is just a fluke.



Left, is a **W.B. Lowry** canning jar dating from as early as 1866. Lower left, is the patent issued to **Frederick S. Lowry** filed March 9, 1903 for his honeycombed or cellular band containing several heart-shaped panels in relief. [Photos courtesy of James L. Murphy]. Lower right, is a photo of **F.S. Lowry** reprinted from the 1906 Roseville booklet. [Photo courtesy of the Roseville Historical Society.]

